HARVARD UNIVERSITY

JOHN KING FAIRBANK
Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History, Emeritus

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bcc: I. Drasnin

March 31, 1980

Professor Henry Breitrose
Chairman
Department of Communication
Cypress Hall
Stanford University
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Professor Breitrose:

Irv Drasnin would be a great catch for any university. He came to our MA program at Harvard in Regional Studies-China about 1948 and proved a very competent scholar in Chinese language and social sciences generally. Instead of going on to a Ph.D. at that time he ventured into a new field and, as I am sure everyone will agree, has become one of the master creators of documentary-and-news discussion TV programs.

I will not try to pass judgment beyond my area of competence, but certainly his documentaries on Shanghai and on the "loss of China" were on the whole the best things done on China in TV. This is because he has an historical grasp of the subject, among other things. In short, he combines high technical competence with a first-rate scholarly intelligence, with a capacity both to understand the historical significance of events and to convey it effectively. This is a rare talent and will make him an inspiring teacher.

He is also personally outgoing and enthusiastic, and has a great deal to offer students in this important field.

Sincerely,

John K. Fairbank/jh

John K. Fairbank

JKF:jh

Dictated but not read.
Signed in his absence.

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Mr. Irv Drasnin
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